
Yoichi Isahaya. *The Modification of the Twelve-animal Cycle in the Cultural Sphere of Literary Persian: a Consideration of the Twelve-animal Cycle of the Timurid Period*

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- 1 This study of the cycle of twelve animal years draws on the example of the fusion of Turko-Mongol and Iranian elements following the Mongol invasion of the Iranian plateau in the 13th century. Introduced in Iran by the Ilkhanids, this calendar initially started at Lichun, as did the Chinese calendar. In later years however, the starting point was moved to the vernal equinox – the first day of the Iranian calendar. The author concludes from various sources that this change initially took place among officials of the Iranian financial administration during the Timurid period, when Turko-Mongol rulers used the 12-animal cycle in decrees on taxation while tax collectors used the Khani Calendar, which set the beginning of the year on the vernal equinox. As a consequence, Iranian bureaucrats gradually considered the animal year as starting on the vernal equinox. Following the diffusion of Nowruz celebrations among Turko-Mongols, the modified 12-year animal cycle spread widely in Persianate societies.

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